

A Wake Up Call

Most recently, “Robin Williams' death has served as a stark reminder that we have a long way to go in helping people at serious risk for suicidal self-harm. Part of the challenge, say experts, is that despite their stigma, suicidal thoughts are quite common, particularly among people who are depressed. It is an incredible tragedy when people take their own lives. But when someone of comedian Robin Williams' stature completes suicide, it seems so much worse. Not because his death matters more than that of anyone else – it doesn't -- but because of how it may affect people also suffering from mental illness and at risk for suicide, as well as the impact of those close to the victim.” (Source: *American Mental Health Counselors Association*)

Making a Difference

In order to make a difference, we must first recognize the risk factors, warning signs, and changes in a person's behavior to be cognizant of. During Suicide Prevention Month, we will provide this information to you.

Suicide Risk Factors

- One or more prior suicide attempts
- Family history of mental disorder or substance abuse
- Family history of suicide or family violence
 - Physical abuse
 - Sexual abuse
- Chronic physical illness, including chronic pain (Cancer, HIV, Aides)
 - Incarceration
- Exposure to the suicidal behavior of others

(Source: <http://www.webmd.com/depression/guide/depression-recognizing-signs-of-suicide>)